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INDIAN DROPOUTS AND GRADUATES
IN NORTHERN ALBERTA

by



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A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Indian Dropouts and Graduates in Northern Alberta," submitted by William Charles McCarthy, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to determine the magnitude of the dropout problem among Indian and Metis students, and ascertain their whereabouts and status after having left school for several years.

Information was gathered from two sources, the school registers and a semi-structured interview questionnaire. The population included 191 Indian and Metis students enrolled in grades five, six, and seven in 1963/64 in eight schools north of Lesser Slave Lake. The progress of each student was traced through the registers to dropout, and then followed up by a survey to administer the interview questionnaire. Ninety respondents, or 47 percent, completed the questionnaire.

Dropout information was available for 120 former students, all of whom completed grade five. Before entering or without completing grade six, 4.2 percent dropped out, by grade seven, 14.2 percent, by grade eight, 30.0 percent, by grade nine, 52.5 percent, by grade ten, 77.5 percent, by grade eleven, 86.7 percent, and by grade twelve, 96.7 percent. Females had a consistently lower dropout rate than males, and the rates were much higher in the relatively isolated schools.

The levels of education of the parents of students from the isolated schools were considerably lower than those from the less isolated schools. When the grade achievements

of parents and students were compared, 5.6 percent of the parents completed grade eight, compared with 70.0 percent of their children.

Present residence data were available for 168 former students, 66.0 percent of whom were living in their home village, or a nearby Indian village, 13.0 percent were residents of the towns of the Peace River-Slave Lake area, 4.0 percent were living in the cities of Edmonton or Calgary, and 11.0 percent were living in northern British Columbia. The students from the less isolated schools were much more mobile than those from isolated schools. Metis students were more mobile than treaty Indian students.

Seventy-one percent of the respondents said they would be willing to move to a larger centre if steady work were available, but 70.0 percent also said they preferred to live in their home village. At the time of the survey, 29.6 percent of those interviewed were employed, 51.0 percent of the males, and 10.0 percent of the females.

Sixty-four percent had considered further schooling, but 69.0 percent did not know of one source of information or help in acquiring further training.

In general, the more isolated the school, geographically and/or psychologically, the lower the parents level of education, the higher the dropout rate, the greater the tendency to marry earlier, and the less the tendency to look for employment in other areas and migrate to those areas.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM

INTRODUCTION

The policy of federal administration of Indian Affairs from 1867 to 1945 was one of paternalism and protectionism. The source of this policy which for some eighty years influenced Indian Affairs was found in the treaties which surrendered the Indians' exclusive interest in the land to the Crown, and in return received their reservations and small additional benefits such as cash payments, annuities, and educational facilities (Morris, 1880).

The years immediately following the Second World War witnessed a change in policy in Indian Affairs, what has been called a "Democratic Ideology: The Indian, a Full-Fledged Citizen (Hawthorne, 1967:23)." Attitudes slowly began to change and by the period 1960 to 1965 its effect was felt particularly in the field of education. Education was then considered, as it still is in 1971, the primary means of the promotion of the policy of the integration of the Indian people into Canadian society. What was meant by integration was the Indians' full participation in the economic and social life of Canada, together with the retention of such cultural characteristics

as pride of origin, knowledge of their history, transmission of their traditions and the preservation of their language. Considering education as the primary means of promoting integration, the Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons on Indian Affairs (Education and Development of Human Resources, 1961:610) declared:

the key to the full realization of self-determination and self-government and mutual self-respect for the heritage of the Indian and non-Indian will be found in the field of education

As a direct result of the new policy, many new schools were built, and between 1948 and 1964, Indian school enrollment in Canada increased from 23,285 to 55,475. The Indian Affairs' budget for education was approximately \$5,000,000 in 1948, but had risen to \$31,500,000 by 1963, slightly more than half the total budget of the Indian Affairs Branch for that year (Hawthorne, 1967:31).

The new policy must also be given credit for encouraging a vast program of school integration. Fewer than 100 Indian children attended integrated schools in 1945, but by 1967, more than fifty percent were attending such schools (Hawthorne, 1967:31). The legal basis for the attendance of Indian children in integrated schools is to be found in Section 113 of the Indian Act and Section 178 (6) of the Alberta School Act, 1955 and its accompanying regulations.

The Metis were also given more consideration and included in the development of new educational facilities and programs. In 1959 a survey was made of the Metis pupils who were living outside the cities of Alberta, the first time that statistics on Metis children in the province were ever compiled (Chalmers, 1967). About 3,800 children of school age were discovered, mostly in Northern Alberta, and many not attending school at all or attending Indian Affairs' schools as guests. Those Metis children attending school were in schools under various types of administration. The Metis colony schools were administered by the Department of Public Welfare, some schools were administered by the nearest established school division, such as in the Lac La Biche School Division, and others were independent school districts such as Conklin and Anzac. Regardless of their administration, all such schools suffered from lack of adequate funds, facilities and equipment, and were experiencing great difficulty in staffing these schools with qualified teachers.

Chalmers (1967:270) cites a number of circumstances which arose, more or less simultaneously, which focused attention on the education of Metis children. In 1959, Metis Colony schools were brought under the direction of the Department of Education. Both Indian Affairs' schools and many of the independent districts were experiencing extreme overcrowding. All these schools needed more and

better teachers, more classrooms, buses, and more adequate administration and supervision.

These problems were presented to the Minister of Education, the Hon. A. O. Aalborg, who in turn persuaded the cabinet that a new educational policy was well overdue (Chalmers, 1967:271):

that every child for whom the Province of Alberta is responsible should have the right to attend a public school of good minimum standard, and this regardless of the tax resources of the area affected.

The end result was the establishment, on December 30, 1960, of Northland School Division.

The Alberta Department of Education, in acting to centralize the administration of northern Indian and Metis schools, had as a model the Northern Areas Branch of the Saskatchewan Department of Education. Davis (1967:286) notes that in Saskatchewan, "Educational policymaking in the north became almost exclusively a Department prerogative. Financing . . . had to be largely by Provincial grants." Lacking the assistance of local government, "the role of the Northern Branch head became all-encompassing."

In Northland School Division, visible improvements have been many during the period 1961 to 1971. Well-equipped classrooms were transported into the forest, or constructed as time, roads, and materials dictated, and good teacherages with electricity and running water were provided. In 1961 the federal and provincial governments signed an agreement for the building of vocational school facilities. Northland

School Division was quick to take advantage of these federal funds, building vocational schools at Grouard, Fort Chipewyan, and Fort McMurray, and expanding the program in the already existing facilities at Desmarais. As well as the improvement of physical plant and curriculum, the level of teacher qualifications had steadily risen. Chalmers (1967:280) concludes:

School programmes are at last being developed to move Canada's northern Metis and Indians from the nineteenth to the twentieth century, from forest to urban living . . . the movement to complete integration has begun; it is an irreversible reaction that will go to completion.

Chalmers acknowledges that such a transition will take many years to complete, and will not be complete until white people accept without reservation these Canadians of Indian ancestry.

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

The problem investigated in this study was one of ascertaining the success of Northland School Division in attaining their goals of raising the Indian and Metis students' levels of education, and their integration into the mainstream of Canadian society. Firstly, how much progress has been made in raising Indian and Metis levels of education in the schools of Northland School Division? Secondly, what happens to these students when they leave school? Two types of studies were utilized: a survey of

grade levels achieved, or in other words, a dropout study, and a follow-up study to establish the status of the students after graduation or dropout. From the statement of the problem the following research questions emerged.

Research Questions

1. What was the dropout rate for the population sample?
2. What were the highest grades completed by the parents of these students?
3. What was the age at dropout for each student in the population sample?
4. What were the stated reasons of the population sample for leaving school?
5. What were the feelings of these students concerning school in their first and last years?
6. What were the residence patterns for the students in the population sample?
7. What were the residence preferences of the students in the population sample?
8. What types of employment had been found by the students in the population sample?
9. How many of the students had looked for work in other areas?
10. How many students had considered returning to school for further training?
11. What types of training would the students in

the population sample wish to take?

12. How many students knew where to go to find information and help with further training?

13. What kinds of help for students did the students of the population sample feel would be beneficial?

Need for the Study

By 1971, Northland School Division had been in operation for a period of ten years and desired that a dropout and follow-up study be undertaken to establish dropout rates, and evaluate their program from another viewpoint. The federal government had declared the Lesser Slave Lake District, which is part of Northland School Division, as a development area, and the Human Resources Development Authority and Alberta Vocational Center at Grouard, both provincial agencies, were cooperating with the federal government in its human and resource development. These two government agencies desired some of the data revealed by this study. To date, there has never been a statistical study of the dropout problem among Indian and Metis of northern Alberta nor a follow-up study of their whereabouts and success in the world of work. This study was proposed as a first step in gathering such information.

Delimitations

1. This study was confined to the student population enrolled in grades five, six, and seven in 1963/64.

2. The study was delimited to a representative

sample of eight schools in the area north of Lesser Slave Lake, including the following schools: Cadotte Lake School, Little Buffalo School, Loon Lake School, Trout Lake School, Atikameg School, Gift Lake School, Utikuma School, and the school at Grouard.

Limitations

A very high percentage of the individuals interviewed were living in their home village, a neighboring village, or in High Prairie. Any conclusions or implications drawn from the data must take into account that few students living farther away from their home area were interviewed.

There was only one school on an Indian reservation in this sample, namely Atikameg, which, because of its geographical location and history, has its own characteristics. Any conclusions or comparisons must be made with extreme caution, taking into account the local conditions and characteristics.

Definitions

1. The term "dropout" is used in this study as defined by Selinger (1968:5):

A pupil who has been in membership but who withdrew from membership before graduating from secondary school or before completing an equivalent program of studies. Such an individual is considered a dropout whether his dropping out occurred during or between school terms, whether his dropping out occurred before or after he had passed the compulsory school attendance age, and if the minimum amount of school

work for graduation had not been completed except by reason of death.

2. The term "Treaty Indian" is used as defined by Chalmers (1967:261). "A treaty Indian in Alberta is simply a person of native ancestry who is registered as an Indian with the Indian Affairs Branch of the federal government."

3. The term "Metis" is used in this study to include all persons of Indian ancestry who are not presently registered as treaty Indians.

4. The term "relatively isolated" is used to refer to the area 75 miles or further from the nearest town, in this study either Peace River or High Prairie.

5. The term "psychologically isolated" is used to refer to persons with feelings of separation from the larger society, even though they may not be as geographically isolated from it as are other persons.

Chapter 2

RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH DESIGN

RELATED LITERATURE

Dropout Studies

The review of the literature undertaken in preparation for this study disclosed only one record of research undertaken specifically on the dropout problem and in a similar setting to that of Northland School Division, the study done by A. C. Goucher (1968) entitled "The Dropout Problem Among Indian and Metis Students." The Goucher study differed from the present study in several ways. It was a study of one school, Frontier Collegiate, a modern composite high school established in 1965 as a co-educational, residential institution, located at Cranberry Portage in northern Manitoba. The Goucher study also differed in its aim and methodology. Its aim was to discover what factors contributed to the high dropout rate, and its methodology was to utilize both teacher and student attitude and opinion questionnaires. The Frontier Collegiate study sought to answer two questions; why there was such a high attrition rate, and what could be done about it, with an emphasis upon the second question. Although Goucher (1968:1) refers to an "increase in the

number of dropouts," at no point in the study are any statistics given on the dropout rate.

Two other studies were done on the Indian dropout problem since Goucher's research was completed. In the United States of America, Alphonse D. Selinger (1968) compiled dropout statistics on Indian high school students in the six northwestern states. His basic findings are in Appendix C. Charles S. Owens (1969) replicated Selinger's study in the six southwestern states, which together with Selinger's statistics gives comprehensive statistics for twelve of the western states. Selinger admitted that the numerous studies of dropouts did not present data from which well defined comparisons could be made. He states (1968:2): "Variations in geographic locations and in group samples, as well as in designs and procedures, preclude meaningful comparisons of findings." Comparisons with such data as Selinger's and Owens' must be made with extreme caution.

E. S. Scragg (1968) completed a longitudinal dropout study of all grade nine students in Alberta in 1963. Scragg spent considerable time reviewing factors significant to dropout, including studies from outside Canada, Canadian studies other than Alberta, and Alberta studies.

For the purposes of this present study, Scragg's findings on dropout statistics were relevant for

comparison. Scragg found that 38.9 percent of the 1963 grade nine students graduated in 1968, 12.6 percent with matriculation, and 26.3 percent with diplomas. Of the 61.1 percent who did not graduate in 1968, 29 percent were continuing with their high school education, and 71 percent had dropped out without completing.

Follow-up Studies

The difficulty of locating dropouts after they have withdrawn from school, and the heavy time and financial demands of such research has resulted in few studies being reported in the follow-up of school dropouts. There has been only one follow-up study of Indian or Metis students to date.

A follow-up study of 89 Metis Indian enrollees in a vocational training school in northern Saskatchewan was undertaken by Wanhella and published in part by Davis (1967:276). The Northern Indian and Metis Vocational Training Program was jointly established by the Saskatchewan Department of Education and Natural Resources, and the federal government. It was a three-year project comprised of a six-month course including basic English, and Mathematics along with training in a trade of their choice.

The Wanhella study found that of the 89 enrollees in the program, 11 males and 12 females had found permanent employment, a total of 23 students, or 26 percent. A total of 27 other males, or 30 percent, completed the

course but had not found employment. A number failed to complete the course, 11 males and 22 females, a total of 23, or 37 percent. The remaining 6 students went on for further training.

In 1960, B. Y. Card (1963) conducted a survey of the social, economic, and cultural factors as they affected the Metis living in Improvement District 124, the Lesser Slave Lake area. His research included data on the distribution of 300 pupils by grades in the school year 1959/60. Card (1963:248) found that:

the proportion of students in the elementary grades is excessively large, 81.7 percent, small in the junior high grades, and extremely small in the senior high grades, 2 percent.

In another social and economic study of Indians and Metis, in the province of Manitoba, Jean H. Lagasse (1959:119) notes that:

While 19.4 percent (1950 figure) of the Canadian school population is enrolled in grade IX or better, only 4.98 percent (1956 figure) of the Indian pupils are in that category.

The average grade reached for Indians and Metis decreased with age. For the age group 20-29, the average grade reached was 5.37, for the 30-39 age group, 4.80, for the 40-49 age group, 3.80, for the 50-59 age group, the average grade reached was 2.93.

The Lagasse (1959:103) study revealed "a considerable difference in the average education for Metis and Indians from community to community." Where some form

of permanent employment formed the basis of the local economy, such as mining, a higher level of education was achieved. Lagasse (1959:103) also noted a "distinct correlation between the length of time the community had been established and the quality of school facilities available."

The findings of the few follow-up studies on school dropouts has been summarized best by Vincent (1965:28). "The dropouts suffer more from unemployment than do graduates and they assume lower level jobs."

The above statement concurs with data from the Dominion Bureau of Statistics (1965) on Alberta pupils who left school in 1963 and entered occupation groups. For boys who left school in grade nine, 1.3 percent entered white collar occupations, 27.6 percent entered manual labor jobs, 4.6 percent entered the service industry, and 66.5 percent entered primary occupations such as logging, fishing, agriculture, hunting and trapping, or mining and quarrying. Those who left school after grade eleven or twelve entered the following occupation groups: white collar occupations, 22.9 percent; manual occupations, 29.5 percent; service industries, 13.8 percent; primary occupations, 33.8 percent.

Alberta girls that left school in 1963 after completing grade nine entered the following occupations: white collar, 4.9 percent; manual labour, 43.7 percent; service jobs, 22.4 percent; and primary occupations, 29

percent. In contrast, Alberta girls who left school in 1963 with grade eleven or twelve entered the following occupations: white collar, 63.5 percent; manual, 15.4 percent; service, 17.2 percent; and primary, 3.9 percent.

In summary, the literature of a statistical nature on dropouts among Indians and Metis in Canada is sharply limited. The present study attempted to make a beginning in the compilation of such data.

The dropout aspect of this study was largely patterned after the Selinger (1968) and Owens (1969) dropout studies in its longitudinal design, tracing a specific grade population through to graduation or dropout.

The literature on Indian and Metis follow-up studies is also very limited. The Lagasse study was the most extensive to date, but did not classify its respondents by age other than into ten-year categories. The present study differs from the Lagasse study in its population being both a selected age group, from 18 years to 24 years at the time of the survey, and in being longitudinal in design, tracing a specific student population from its 1963 grade status to its 1971 characteristics.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Introduction

For the purpose of identification, this study can be classified as a normative-survey, or descriptive type

design. Information was gathered from two sources, the school registers located in the Northland School Division offices in Edmonton, and a semi-structured interview questionnaire.

For the population sample in this study, the interview questionnaire method had many of the advantages described by Travers (1969:133) and Selltiz (1959:242). Many of the respondents were still living in remote areas where mail services were poor. In cases where the respondents had moved, a relative or friend was often able to give direction to the interviewer as to their present residence, with the result that a much higher percentage of respondents were interviewed than if a mailed questionnaire had been used. The interviewer was able to answer questions concerning the purpose of the interview, and there was the possibility of repeating or rephrasing questions to make sure they were understood and of asking further questions to clarify the meaning of a response. After the advantages and disadvantages of the direct-mail questionnaire method and the interview questionnaire method had been studied in the light of the population sample, the "rule" as reported by Travers (1969:200) was followed: "the safest rule in deciding whether or not to use direct-mail questionnaires is: Don't."

Research Procedures

The population sample was derived from a study and

tabulation of the names of students in grades five, six, and seven in the school registers for the school year 1963/64. The following data were compiled: names of students, dates of birth, grades, schools attended, and the names of parents. By identifying all students by name and identification number, it was possible to compile a composite list by grade and school. The progress of the individuals was then traced through the registers of subsequent years until dropout.

A semi-structured open-ended interview questionnaire (Appendix A) was designed and modified after a pre-test with a dropout typical of the group. One survey trip of one week's duration was completed in March, 1971, before the spring break-up. The survey was completed on a second trip of two week's duration in the following month, April, 1971. For those students who were living in their home village or a nearby village or town, but were not available for an interview at the time of the survey trip, a copy of the questionnaire and letter of explanation (Appendix B) along with a self-addressed stamped envelope were left in the hands of a parent or relative. Where the students could not be located in the Slave Lake-Peace River area or Edmonton, but whose parents were found, details which could be answered by them for their children were completed.

Population Sample

From the study of the school registers, a total

population of 204 individuals was placed on the initial list. Of these 204 individuals, the survey trip disclosed that 11 were non-Indian, mostly children of teachers, two were deceased, and 110 were still living in their home village or in a neighboring village. Present residence data were available for 168 of the living Indian and Metis total population of 191. Of the students living in the area, 85 were available for personal interviews, and another five returned the questionnaire left in their homes. The final group of 90, included forty young men and fifty young women.

Analysis of the Data

The data gathered were coded and transferred to IBM cards. The short objective-type questions were readily codeable, but certain longer observations had to be first categorized and then coded before transfer to punch cards.

Since the primary purpose of this study was description, no tests of statistical significance were reported. The data were described in number and percentage distributions only.

Chapter 3

THE FINDINGS: FORMER NORTHLAND SCHOOL DIVISION INDIAN AND METIS STUDENTS DESCRIBED

PERSONAL DATA

At the time of this study, the individual ages ranged from sixteen to twenty-four. Table 1 shows the numbers and percentages for each yearly age group. The majority, 158 individuals, or 94 percent, fell within the range of 18 to 23 inclusive. Five individuals, 3 percent, fell below 18, and five, 3 percent, were twenty-four years of age.

Table 1

Distribution of the Population
Sample by Present Age

Age	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	Total
Number	2	3	15	23	32	44	29	15	5	168
Percent	1.2	1.8	8.9	13.7	19.0	26.2	17.3	8.9	3.0	100.0

Treaty Indian students were scattered throughout seven of the eight schools, and were in the minority in all but one school, where they were a majority of 88 percent. Table 2 shows that of the 168 individuals, 32

students, or 19 percent, were treaty Indians, and 136, or 81 percent, were Metis. Of the 32 treaty Indians, 14 were students at Atikameg, the only Indian reservation in the population sample.

Table 2
Former Northland Students' Indian
Status by School

School	Treaty		Metis		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Cadotte Lake	3	50	3	50	6	4
Little Buffalo	4	29	10	71	14	8
Loon Lake	2	13	13	87	15	9
Trout Lake	6	32	13	68	19	11
Atikameg	14	88	2	12	16	10
Gift Lake	1	4	23	96	24	14
Utikuma	0	0	25	100	25	15
Grouard	2	4	47	96	49	29
Total	32		136		168	
Total %	19		81			100

For the purposes of this study, by definition, a person was considered married if the couple was living together, and had at least one child, whether or not they had gone through the legal process of marriage.

Marital status data were available for 136

individuals in the population sample. Table 3 shows the distribution by home village. A total of 55 individuals were married, 40.4 percent of the population sample. The village with the highest percentage of married persons was Trout Lake, with a total of 54 percent married. Grouard, the least isolated village, had the lowest percentage among the eight villages, 25 percent.

Table 3
Former Northland Students' Marital
Status by Home Village

Home Village	Marital Status					
	Single		Married		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Cadotte Lake	3	50	3	50	6	4.4
Little Buffalo	6	60	4	40	10	7.4
Loon Lake	8	53	7	47	15	11.0
Trout Lake	6	46	7	54	13	9.6
Atikameg	8	57	6	43	14	10.3
Gift Lake	14	64	8	36	22	16.2
Utikuma	9	45	11	55	20	14.7
Grouard	27	75	9	25	36	26.5
Total	81		55		136	100.0
Total %	59.6		40.4		100	

When analyzed by sex, 24 percent of the males were married, compared with 52 percent of the females. When the more isolated area is compared to the less isolated area, Table 5 shows that the marriage rate is higher in the isolated area, for males 29 percent to 21 percent, for females, 57 percent to 48 percent.

Table 4

Former Northland Students'
Marital Status by Sex

Sex	Marital Status					
	Single		Married		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	42	76	13	24	55	40
Female	39	48	42	52	81	60
Total	81		55		136	
Total %	60		40		100	100

Of the married couples, 39 had children, 16 had one child, 11 had two children, 6 had three children, four had four children, one had five children, and one had six.

Table 5

Former Northland Students' Marital
Status by School Area and Sex

School Area	Single				Married				Total			
	Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Area 1 ^a	15	71	16	43	6	29	21	57	21	36	37	64
Area 2 ^b	27	79	23	52	7	21	21	48	34	44	44	56
Total	42		39		13		42		55		81	
Total %	76		48		24		52		40		60	

^aArea 1 includes the following schools: Cadotte Lake, Little Buffalo, Loon Lake, Trout Lake, and Atikameg.

^bArea 2 includes: Gift Lake, Utikuma, and Grouard.

DROPOUT DATA

The dropout rate was calculated from highest grade completed data. For example, all students completed grade five, but five individuals dropped out of school either without entering grade six or not completing the year. The five individuals were then related to the 120 total population to give a dropout rate of 4.2 percent for grade six.

Table 6 shows the progressive dropout rate by grade and sex for the total population. For the total

Table 6

Progressive Dropout Rate of Former Northland
Students by Grade and Sex

Grade	Sex				Total	
	Male		Female		Dropout Rate	
	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	%
5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
6	1	2.0	4	6.0	5	4.2
7	7	13.0	10	15.0	17	14.2
8	17	32.0	19	28.5	36	30.0
9	30	56.0	33	49.5	63	52.5
10	44	82.0	49	73.5	93	77.5
11	48	90.0	56	83.5	104	86.7
12	52	98.0	64	95.5	116	96.7
Total N	53	100.0	67	100.0	120	100.0
Total %	44.2		55.8		100.0	

sample, there was a 4.2 percent dropout rate at the grade six level, 14.2 percent at the grade seven level, 30.0 percent at the grade eight level, 52.5 percent at the grade nine level, 77.5 percent at the grade ten level, 86.7 percent at the grade eleven level, and 96.7 percent at the grade twelve level.

From grade eight upward, the females had a

slightly lower dropout rate than the males: in grade eight, the rates were 28.5 percent for females and 32.0 percent for males; in grade nine, the rates were females, 49.5 percent, and males, 56.0 percent; in grade ten, the gap widened to 73.5 percent for females and 82.0 percent for males; in grade eleven it was 83.5 percent for females and 90.0 percent for males; and in grade twelve, the rate was 95.5 percent for females and 98.0 percent for males. In terms of completion, three girls, or 4.5 percent, graduated from high school, and only one boy, or 2.0 percent, graduated.

Table 7 compares the dropout rates in Area 1, the geographically or psychologically isolated schools, with the dropout rates in Area 2, the less isolated schools. Students from Atikameg were placed in the isolated category by virtue of their psychological isolation as residents of an Indian reservation. In grades seven, eight, and nine, the dropout rate in Area 1 schools was more than double the rate in Area 2 schools: in grade eight the rates were 44.0 percent to 34 percent. In grades ten and eleven, the dropout rate was approximately 30 percent higher in Area 1 schools. In this sample, no student from Area 1 completed the high school program, a dropout rate of 100.0 percent, while four students from Area 2 completed the high school program, which gave a corresponding dropout rate of 94.0 percent.

Table 7

Progressive Dropout Rate of Former Northland
Students by Grade and School Area^a

Grade	School Area				Total Dropout Rate	
	Area 1		Area 2			
	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	%
5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
6	3	5.0	2	3.0	5	4.2
7	12	21.0	5	8.0	17	14.2
8	25	44.0	11	18.0	36	30.0
9	42	74.0	21	34.0	63	52.5
10	53	93.0	40	64.0	93	77.5
11	56	98.0	48	77.0	104	86.7
12	57	100.0	59	94.0	116	96.7
Total	57	100.0	63	100.0	120	100.0
Total %	47.5		52.5		100.0	

^aArea 1 includes: Cadotte Lake, Little Buffalo, Loon Lake, Trout Lake and Atikameg. Area 2 includes: Gift Lake, Utikuma, and Grouard.

Table 8 compares the dropout rates between treaty Indian and Metis students. There was a slightly lower dropout rate for treaty Indians in grades six and seven, but a consistently higher dropout rate for treaty Indians in grades eight through twelve. In grade eight the treaty

rate was 35.7 percent, while the Metis rate was 28.2 percent; in grade nine, the rates were, treaties 60.7 percent, and Metis 49.9 percent; in grade ten the rates were, 92.8 percent for treaty Indian students, and 72.7 percent for Metis students. In grade eleven, the treaty Indian dropout rate was 96.4 percent, and the Metis rate was 83.6 percent. In this population sample, no treaty Indian student completed the high school program, which gave a dropout rate in grade twelve of 100.0 percent. Of the Metis students, four completed the high school program, which gave a dropout rate of 95.7 percent for grade twelve.

Table 8

Progressive Dropout Rate of Former Northland
Students by Grade and Indian Status

Grade	Treaty		Metis		Total Dropout Rate	
	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	%
5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
6	1	3.6	4	4.3	5	4.2
7	3	10.7	14	15.2	17	14.2
8	10	35.7	26	28.2	36	30.0
9	17	60.7	46	49.9	63	52.5
10	26	92.8	67	72.7	93	77.5
11	27	96.4	77	83.6	104	86.7
12	28	100.0	88	95.7	116	96.7
Total	28	100.0	92	100.0	120	100.0
Total %	23.3		76.7		100.0	

Table 9 shows the highest grade completed by school, the percentage rate of completion by grade, and the corresponding dropout rate.

In this population sample, Table 9 shows that at the Trout Lake school, only one student completed grade eight, and none went beyond the grade eight level. Three schools, Cadotte Lake, Trout Lake, and Atikameg had no students who had studied beyond the grade nine level. Two schools, Gift Lake, and Grouard, had students who had completed studies at the grade ten, eleven, and twelve levels.

Tables 10 and 11 show the education of the parents by grade level, sex, and residence area. Table 10 shows that 40 percent of the parents of the population sample received no formal schooling whatsoever, and when compared to the education of the children there was a marked contrast. All of their children completed grade five, but only 28.7 percent of the parents were able to do so. At the grade six level, 23.1 percent of the parents completed the year, compared to 95.8 percent for their children. At the grade seven level, the rates were 10.9 percent for the parents, and 85.8 percent for the children; and at the grade eight level, 5.6 percent of the parents completed the grade, as compared to 70.0 percent for their children. No parent had studied beyond the grade eight level.

When analyzed by residence area, 54.4 percent of the Area 1 parents received no formal schooling, compared

Table 9

Former Northland Students' Highest Grade
Completed by School and Dropout Rate

School	Highest Grade Completed							
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Cadotte Lake	1	2	1	1	1	0	0	0
Little Buffalo	1	0	1	3	2	1	1	0
Loon Lake	1	3	2	5	2	2	0	0
Trout Lake	0	4	8	1	0	0	0	0
Atikameg	0	0	1	7	6	0	0	0
Gift Lake	1	1	1	4	6	2	2	2
Utikuma	0	2	3	2	3	2	0	0
Grouard	1	0	2	4	10	4	9	2
Total No.	5	12	19	27	30	11	12	4
% by Grade	4.2	10.0	15.8	22.5	25.0	9.2	10.0	3.3
Completed	100.0	95.8	85.8	70.0	47.5	22.5	13.3	3.3
Dropout Rate	0.0	4.2	14.2	30.0	52.5	77.5	86.7	96.7

Table 10
Former Northland Students' Parents'
Education by Grade

Grade Completed	Fathers' Education		Mothers' Education		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
None	44	40	46	41	90	40.0
One	3	3	8	7	11	5.2
Two	2	2	6	5.5	8	3.4
Three	8	7	3	3	11	5.2
Four	8	7	4	3.5	12	5.3
Five	7	6	6	5.5	13	5.6
Six	14	12	14	12	28	12.2
Seven	4	3	8	7	12	5.3
Eight	8	7	5	4.5	13	5.6
Don't know	15	13	13	11	28	12.2
Total	113	100.0	113	100.0	226	100.0
Total %		50.0		50.0		100.0

Table 11
Former Northland Students' Parents'
Education by Grade and Area

Grade Completed	Area 1		Area 2		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
None	60	54.5	30	26.0	90	40.0
One	6	5.5	5	4.3	11	5.2
Two	1	0.9	7	6.0	8	3.4
Three	5	4.6	6	5.2	11	5.2
Four	7	6.3	5	4.3	12	5.3
Five	1	0.9	12	10.4	13	5.6
Six	12	10.8	16	13.8	28	12.2
Seven	6	5.5	6	5.2	12	5.3
Eight	2	1.8	11	9.5	13	5.6
Don't know	10	9.2	18	15.6	28	12.2
Total	110	100.0	116	100.0	226	100.0

to 25.6 percent in Area 2. Two parents, or 1.8 percent, from Area 1 completed grade eight, while eleven parents, or 9.5 percent, from Area 2 had completed grade eight.

Concerning the respondents' age at dropout, Tables 12 and 13 reveal that where higher grades were more easily accessible, the students tended to stay in school beyond the legal school leaving age. At Grouard 17 of the 25, or 68 percent, of the respondents had stayed in school at least one year beyond the legal school leaving age of sixteen. In contrast to these figures, at Trout Lake 9 out of 13, or 69 percent, had left school by the age of 15, and all had dropped out by age sixteen.

Girls tended to remain in school longer than boys. For the total sample population, by age sixteen, 66 percent of the boys had dropped out of schools, and 62 percent of the girls had left. In Area 1, the relatively more isolated schools, 90 percent of the boys had dropped out of school before or by the legal school leaving age of sixteen, while 62 percent of the girls had dropped out of school by age sixteen. In Area 2, 52 percent of the boys had left school on or before age sixteen, and 62 percent of the girls had dropped out by the age of sixteen. These last figures are a reverse trend to Area 1 figures, with girls tending to drop out earlier than boys. This may be explained by the close proximity of the Grouard vocational school, which offered subjects of high interest to the

Table 12
Former Northland Students' Age
At Dropout by School

School	Age at Dropout								Total
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
Cadotte Lake	1	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	6
Little Buffalo	1	1	4	2	0	0	0	0	8
Loon Lake	1	3	4	4	1	0	0	0	13
Trout Lake	1	8	4	0	0	0	0	0	13
Atikameg	0	2	5	5	1	0	0	0	13
Gift Lake	0	2	9	4	1	0	0	0	16
Utikuma	0	6	4	1	0	0	0	0	11
Grouard	0	2	6	3	4	7	1	2	25
Total	4	25	38	21	7	7	1	2	105
Total %	3.8	23.8	36.2	20.0	6.7	6.7	1.0	1.9	100

Table 13

Former Northland Students' Age at Dropout
by Schhol Area and Sex

Age	Area 1				Area 2				Total			
	Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
14	1	5	3	9	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	5
15	6	32	9	26	6	20	4	19	12	24	13	24
16	10	53	9	26	10	32	9	43	20	40	18	33
17	2	10	11	32	4	13	4	19	6	12	15	27
18	0	0	2	6	4	13	1	5	4	8	3	5
19	0	0	0	0	5	16	2	9	5	10	2	4
20	0	0	0	0	1	3	1	5	1	2	1	2
21	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	2	0	0
Total	19		34		31		21		50		55	
Total %	38		62		62		38		47.6		52.4	

male sector of this population sample.

A number of respondents in the relatively isolated areas stated that they would have continued on in school beyond age sixteen, if higher grades had been offered in their home village.

Table 14 shows the stated reasons for dropping out of school. The two most frequently stated reasons were concerned with teacher-pupil relationships, and attitudes toward subject material and curriculum. In the area of teacher-pupil relationships, 15 students, or 17.4 percent, stated that they were either expelled, or had had "trouble with the teacher" and "quit" as a result of that conflict. An even larger percentage stated that they were tired, bored, or had lost interest in the subject matter offered by the curriculum.

Table 15 reveals the feelings of the students toward school in their first and last years of school. Of those that could remember how they felt about school in grade one, 62 students, or 69 percent recalled it as a "pleasant" experience, and 11 students, or 12 percent remembered it as an "unpleasant" experience. By the time they had reached their last year of schooling, those feelings had changed, and 43 students, or 48 percent, remembered their last year as a "pleasant" experience, while 42 students, or 47 percent, considered their last year in school an "unpleasant" experience.

Concerning the favorite school subject of the

Table 14

Former Northland Students' Stated
Reasons for Leaving School

Reasons	Students	
	No.	%
To help at home	15	17.4
To go to work	6	7.0
Expelled, or trouble with teacher	15	17.4
Did not like Grouard and/or dorm life	6	7.0
Tired, bored, lost interest	22	25.7
To get married, pregnant	6	7.0
Lonely, feared examination	7	8.1
Personal reasons	5	5.7
Completed grade twelve	4	4.7
Total	86	100.0

Table 15

Former Northland Students' Feelings
About School First and Last Year

Feelings	First Year		Last Year	
	No.	%	No.	%
Pleasant	62	69	43	48
Unpleasant	11	12	42	47
Neither	2	2	3	3
Can't Recall	15	17	2	2
Total	90		90	
Total %		100		100

students in this population sample, Table 16 shows that mathematics was by far the best liked subject, with 32 students, or 35.6 percent, choosing it as their favorite. Language and science vied for the reputation as the least preferred subjects, with only 5.6 percent of the respondents choosing them as favorites.

FOLLOW-UP DATA

Present residence data were available from respondents or parents and relatives of 168 former students. Table 17 shows that in three home villages--Cadotte Lake, Trout Lake, and Atikameg--100 percent of the former students in 1963 in the population sample were residents of that same village or an Indian village in the area at the time of this investigation. Loon Lake also had a high percentage, 87 percent, living at home or in a nearby village. Grouard and Utikuma had considerably fewer former students living at or near home, with 45 percent and 40 percent respectively.

Looking at the population sample as a whole, 83 students, or 50 percent were residents of their home village, while 27 students, or 16 percent, were living in a nearby Indian village. Twenty-two students, or 13 percent, were living in the towns and communities of the Peace River-Slave Lake area. Some 7 students, or 4 percent, were residents of the cities of Edmonton or Calgary. Nineteen students were living in the northern

Table 16
Former Northland Students'
Favorite Subject by Sex

Subject	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Mathematics	16	50	16	50	32	35.6
Science	1	20	4	80	5	5.6
Social Studies	6	50	6	50	12	13.3
Reading	5	45	6	55	11	12.2
Spelling	2	29	5	71	7	7.8
Language	2	40	3	60	5	5.6
Vocational	2	29	5	71	7	7.8
No Preference	6	55	5	45	11	12.2
Total	40	44.4	50	55.6	90	100.0
Total %		44.4		55.6		100.0

Table 17

Former Northland Students' Present Residence by Home Village

Present Residence	Cadotte Lake		Little Buffalo		Loon Lake		Trout Lake		Atikameg		Gift Lake		Utikuma		Grouard		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Same Village	4	67	4	29	11	74	9	47	13	81	13	54	9	36	20	41	83	50
Village Area	2	33	4	29	2	13	10	53	3	19	3	13	1	4	2	4	27	16
Peace R.- Slave L. Area	0	0	1	7	2	13	0	0	0	0	3	13	7	28	9	18	22	13
Edmonton- Calgary	0	0	3	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	3	6	7	4
Northern B.C.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	13	7	28	9	18	19	11
Vancouver	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	4	3	2
Other	0	0	2	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	4	8	7	4
Total	6	100	14	100	15	100	19	100	16	100	24	100	25	100	49	100	168	100
Total %	3.6		8.3		8.9		11.3		9.5		14.3		14.9		29.2		100	39

British Columbia area, including such places as, Dawson Creek, Chetwynd, Prince George and Quesnel. All 19 students, or 11 percent, resident in these towns, came from either Gift Lake, Utikuma, or Grouard.

When examined from the viewpoint of sex, Table 18 shows that 60 percent of the males were residents of their home village as compared to 42 percent of the females, but 20 percent of the females were residents of nearby villages, as compared to 7 percent of the males. More females than males in this sample were living in the communities of the Peace River-Slave Lake area--16 percent of the females and 9 percent of the males. While 7 percent of the females were residents of Calgary or Edmonton, not one male was now residing in either of these cities. The northern British Columbia area had drawn 11 males, or 15 percent, to that region, as compared to 8 females, or 8 percent.

When approached from the standpoint of areas, Table 19 shows that Area 1, the relatively more isolated area, had 89 percent living in their home village or a nearby village, compared to 49 percent in Area 2. Only 4 percent from Area 1 were residents of the communities of the Peace River-Slave Lake area as compared to 19.5 percent from Area 2. There were no respondents from Area 1 living in the northern British Columbia area, compared to 19.5 percent from Area 2. The Area 2 population was considerably more mobile than that of Area 1.

Table 18
Former Northland Students' Present
Residence by Sex

Present Residence	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Same Village	42	60	41	42	83	50
Village Area	7	10	20	21	27	16
Peace River- Slave Lake Area	6	9	16	16	22	13
Edmonton- Calgary	0	0	7	7	7	4
Northern B.C.	11	15	8	8	19	11
Vancouver	2	3	1	1	3	2
Other	2	3	5	5	7	4
Total	70	100	98	100	168	100
Total %	41.7		58.3			100

Table 19
Former Northland Students' Present
Residence by Home Village Area

Present Residence	Area 1 ^a		Area 2 ^b		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Same Village	41	59	42	43	83	50
Village Area	21	30	6	6	27	16
Peace River- Slave Lake Area	3	4	19	19.5	22	13
Edmonton- Calgary	3	4	4	4	7	4
Northern B. C.	0	0	19	19.5	19	11
Vancouver	0	0	3	3	3	2
Other	2	3	5	5	7	4
Total	70	100	98	100	168	100
Total %	41.5		58.5		100	

^aIncludes Cadotte Lake, Little Buffalo, Loon Lake, Trout Lake, and Atikameg.

^bIncludes Gift Lake, Utikuma and Grouard.

Table 20 shows that the higher the education level achieved above grade nine, the more mobile the students tended to become. Of the 31 students that completed grade 9, 27 were still living in their home village or a nearby village. Only 4 of these students had moved out of the Indian village area. On the other hand, of the 11 students who completed grade 10, 8 were residents of towns or cities away from their home area. Of those students who had completed grade 11, 8 out of 12 were living away from their home village area. Of those students that had completed grade 12, 3 out of 4 were residents of towns or cities away from their home area.

There was a marked contrast between treaty Indian and Metis residence patterns in this population sample. Table 21 shows that only 1 out of 32, or 3 percent, of the treaty Indian students was living away from his home village or area, while 57 out of 136, or 42 percent, of the Metis students were residents of towns and cities or in areas away from the home village area. The Metis tended to be much more mobile than the treaty Indians.

Table 22 shows the responses to the question, "Where do you prefer to live?" In Area 1, at Trout Lake, 84 percent preferred to continue living there; at Loon Lake, 67 percent; at Little Buffalo, 80 percent; but at Cadotte Lake and Atikameg the percentage dropped to 50 percent. In Area 2, at Gift Lake 80 percent preferred to continue residence there, at Utikuma 100 percent, but

Table 20

Former Northland Students' Present Residence
by Highest Grade Completed

Present Residence	Highest Grade Completed							
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Same Village	3	9	12	23	21	3	4	1
Village Area	2	3	6	0	6	0	0	0
Peace R.- Slave L. Area	0	0	0	0	1	5	5	2
Edmonton- Calgary	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Northern B.C.	0	0	1	2	1	1	1	0
Vancouver	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0
Total	5	12	19	26	31	11	12	4
Total %	4.2	10	15.8	21.7	25.8	9.2	10	3.3

Table 21

Former Northland Students' Present
Residence by Indian Status

Present Residence	Treaty		Metis		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Same Village	19	59	64	47	83	50
Village Area	12	38	15	11	27	16
Peace River- Slave Lake Area	0	0	22	16	22	13
Edmonton- Calgary	1	3	6	5	7	4
Northern B.C.	0	0	19	14	19	11
Vancouver	0	0	3	2	3	2
Other	0	0	7	5	7	4
Total	32		136		168	
Total %	18	100	82	100	100	100

Table 22

Former Northland Students' Living
Preference by Home Village

Home Village	Same Village		Other Village		Peace R. Towns		B.C. Interior		Other		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Cadotte Lake	3	50	1	17	0	0	0	0	2	33	6	7
Little Buffalo	4	80	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	20	5	6
Loon Lake	10	67	0	0	2	13	0	0	3	21	15	17
Trout Lake	10	84	1	8	0	0	0	0	1	8	12	13
Atikameg	7	50	0	0	3	21	0	0	4	28	14	15
Gift Lake	12	80	1	7	1	7	0	0	1	6	15	17
Utikuma	9	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	10
Grouard	4	28	1	7	5	35	1	7	3	21	14	15
Total	59		4		11		1		15		90	100
Total %	65.6		4.4		12.3		1.1		16.6		100	

at Grouard only 28 percent.

In discussing this matter further with residents of Gift Lake and Utikuma, it was revealed that most of the young men had been away in northern British Columbia working in sawmills and logging operations, but when they married and wanted to settle down, the prospects on their Metis Colony looked much better than in the towns they had

lived in. A new ten-year contract with a lumber company had just been signed and they were also breaking land and going into the raising of cattle.

Table 23 shows the responses to the question, "Would you move to a larger center if you could be sure of steady work?" When the responses from all respondents were tabulated, 71.1 percent replied in the affirmative, 16.7 percent in the negative, and 12.2 percent were uncertain. In Area 1, at Cadotte Lake, 83 percent replied yes, at Little Buffalo, 33 percent replied yes, at Loon Lake, 66 percent replied yes, at Trout Lake, only 42 percent replied in the affirmative, and at Atikameg, 92 percent replied yes. In Area 2, there was also wide variation in responses. At Gift Lake, 88 percent replied yes, and at Grouard, 92 percent replied in the affirmative, but at Utikuma, only 45 percent replied in the affirmative.

When analyzed from the viewpoint of Indian status, as shown in Table 24, 78 percent of the treaty Indians said they would move as compared to 68 percent of the Metis. Of the treaty Indians, 15 percent were uncertain about moving, and of the Metis, 11 percent were uncertain.

Table 25 shows the responses to the move question by sex. The males tended to be more willing to move, with 75 percent in the affirmative, while 68 percent of the females replied in the affirmative. More of the females were uncertain in this matter, with females 16 percent uncertain to males 7 percent.

Table 23
Former Northland Students Who
Would Move, by Home Village

Home Village	Yes		No		Uncertain		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Cadotte Lake	5	83	0	0	1	17	6	6.7
Little Buffalo	2	33	2	33	2	33	6	6.7
Loon Lake	10	66	4	27	1	7	15	16.7
Trout Lake	5	42	5	42	2	16	12	13.3
Atikameg	12	92	0	0	1	8	13	14.4
Gift Lake	15	88	0	0	2	12	17	18.9
Utikuma	4	45	4	45	1	10	9	10.0
Grouard	11	92	0	0	1	8	12	13.3
Total	64		15		11		90	100.0
Total %	71.1		16.7		12.2		100.0	

Table 24

Former Northland Students Who
Would Move, by Indian Status

Indian Status	Yes		No		Uncertain		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Treaty	21	78	2	7	4	15	27	30
Metis	43	68	13	21	7	11	63	70
Total	64		15		11		90	100
Total %	71.1		16.7		12.2			100

Table 25

Former Northland Students Who
Would Move, by Sex

Sex	Yes		No		Uncertain		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	30	75	7	18	3	7	40	44.4
Female	34	68	8	16	8	16	50	55.6
Total	64		15		11		90	100.0
Total %	71.1		16.7		12.2			100.0

Table 26 shows the respondents' replies when asked which town or city they would prefer to live in in the future. Of the 90 respondents, 41, or 45.6 percent, had no preference. The highest was High Prairie, with 32.2

percent, second, Peace River, with 11.1 percent, third, Grand Prairie, with 5.6 percent, fourth, Wabasca, with 3.3 percent, fifth and sixth, Edmonton and Slave Lake, with 1.1 percent each.

The respondents' main desire was to be within easy driving distance or access to their home area.

Table 26
Former Northland Students' Preference
for Place of Residence

Town Preference	No.	%
High Prairie	29	32.2
Peace River	10	11.1
Grande Prairie	5	5.6
Wabasca	3	3.3
Edmonton	1	1.1
Slave Lake	1	1.1
No preference	41	45.6
Total	90	100.0

Most of the kinds of work done by the students in the population sample fell into the category of seasonal employment. Since the survey was made in early spring, the numbers of students employed at that time would possibly be fewer than during the winter months.

Table 27 shows the numbers and percentages of

persons employed by village in the spring of 1971. There was an overall employment rate of 29.6 percent for the total population sample. Atikameg, the only Indian reservation, had the lowest rate of employment with not one person employed at the time of the survey. Trout Lake had the highest rate of employment with 58 percent. All of these persons at Trout Lake were self-employed in the spring hunt for the fur of the beaver and muskrat. Trout Lake and Cadotte Lake were the only two villages where the young men wanted to continue trapping and hunting as a way of life. The highest employment rate of those in other villages was at Grouard, with an employment rate of 45 percent.

Table 27

Former Northland Students Presently
Employed, by Home Village

Home Village	Yes		No		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Cadotte Lake	3	50	3	50	6	6
Little Buffalo	1	17	5	83	6	6
Loon Lake	3	20	12	80	15	15
Trout Lake	7	58	5	42	12	12
Atikameg	0	0	13	100	13	13
Gift Lake	3	18	14	82	17	17
Utikuma	3	33	6	67	9	9
Grouard	9	45	11	55	20	21
Total	29		69		98	100
Total %	29.6		70.4			100

Table 28 shows the employment rates by sex. A much higher percentage of males were employed than females, with the employment rate being 51 percent for males and 10 percent for females.

Table 28

Former Northland Students Presently
Employed, by Sex

Sex	Yes		No		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	24	51	23	49	47	48
Female	5	10	46	90	51	52
Total	29		69		98	100
Total %	29.6		70.4			100

Table 29 shows the employment rates of treaty Indians and Metis. The Metis had a considerably higher employment rate, 35 percent, as compared to 15 percent for the treaty Indians in this population sample.

Table 30 shows the types of jobs held by the population sample. Sawmill work was the job most frequently held, with 28 persons having done this type of work: next came slashing, with 21, and logging, with 19. Trapping was next highest, with 11 persons having done this type of work. Of the ten other types of work done, other than housewife, only 5 or less persons had been involved in

Table 29

Former Northland Students Presently
Employed, by Indian Status

Indian Status	Yes		No		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Treaty	4	15	23	85	27	27.6
Metis	25	35	46	65	71	72.4
Total	29		69		98	100.0
Total %	29.6		70.4			100.0

Table 30

Former Northland Students'
Types of Jobs Held

Type of Job	Number
Trapping	11
Oilwell slashing	21
Logging	19
Farming	5
Sawmill	28
Heavy equipment operator	1
Mechanic	1
Forestry	3
Waitress	5
Hospital clerk	1
Secretarial	1
Store clerk	2
Baby-sitting	5
Housewife	42
Teacher aide	1
Total	146

each type, and only one individual had been employed in each of the skilled areas of mechanic, teacher aide, and secretary, or the semi-skilled jobs of heavy equipment operator and hospital clerk.

Many in the population sample had sought work away from their home areas but most had returned after a short period of time. Table 31 shows that 71.9 percent had looked for work in the areas outside their home region. There was a direct correspondence between distance in the forest to the percentage of persons seeking work outside the forest area. Trout Lake is the most isolated village and only 17 percent had been "outside" to look for work. Loon Lake is the next most isolated and some 43 percent had looked for work away from home. Atikameg, although not as deep in the forest as Cadotte Lake or Little Buffalo, had a percentage of 54 who had looked for work outside. Its isolation may be partly due to its being an Indian Reservation. Grouard and Utikuma had the highest percentage with 94 percent and 91 percent respectively.

More males than females had sought work away from home as shown by Table 32. Of the males, 85 percent had sought work in other areas, as compared to 60 percent for the females.

By Indian Status, Table 33 shows the Metis have been more mobile respecting job hunting than have the treaty Indians in this population sample. For the

Table 31

Former Northland Students Who Had Sought Work
Away From Home Area by Home Village

Home Village	Yes		No		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Cadotte Lake	5	84	1	16	6	4.4
Little Buffalo	7	78	2	22	9	6.7
Loon Lake	6	43	8	57	14	10.4
Trout Lake	2	17	10	83	12	8.9
Atikameg	7	54	6	46	13	9.6
Gift Lake	15	68	7	32	22	16.3
Utikuma	21	91	2	9	23	17.0
Grouard	34	94	2	6	36	26.7
Total	97		38		135	100.0
Total %	71.9		28.1			100.0

Table 32

Former Northland Students Who Had Sought
Work Away From Home Village, by Sex

Sex	Yes		No		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	53	85	9	15	62	45.9
Female	44	60	29	40	73	54.1
Total	97		38		135	100.0
Total %	71.9		28.1			100.0

Metis, 77 percent had looked for work away from their home area, and for the treaty Indians 52 percent.

Table 33

Former Northland Students Who Had Sought Work
Away From Home Village by Indian Status

Indian Status	Yes		No		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Treaty	14	52	13	48	27	20
Metis	83	77	25	23	108	80
Total	97		38		135	100
Total %	71.9		28.1			100

A number of the students had given serious consideration to returning to school for some kind of further training. Table 34 shows that 57 respondents, or 64 percent, had given some thought to the prospect of getting more education. Table 35 shows that a slightly higher percentage of males than females had considered further schooling, 67 percent to 63 percent respectively. Table 36 indicates a higher percentage of treaty Indian students, 67 percent, had given thought to further training than had Metis respondents, 63 percent of whom had considered further schooling.

When asked what types of further training they wished to pursue, Table 37 shows that 21 respondents of

Table 34

Former Northland Students Who Had Considered
Returning to School, by Home Village

Home Village	Yes		No		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Cadotte Lake	4	67	2	33	6	6.7
Little Buffalo	4	67	2	33	6	6.7
Loon Lake	7	50	7	50	14	15.7
Trout Lake	2	17	10	83	12	13.5
Atikameg	10	77	3	23	13	14.6
Gift Lake	11	65	6	35	17	19.1
Utikuma	8	89	1	11	9	10.1
Grouard	11	92	1	8	12	13.5
Total	57	64.0	32	36.0	89	100.0
Total %	64.0		36.0			100.0

Table 35

Former Northland Students Who Had Considered
Returning to School, by Sex

Sex	Yes		No		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	27	67	13	33	40	44.9
Female	30	63	19	37	49	55.1
Total	57	64.0	32	36.0	89	100.0
Total %		64.0		36.0		100.0

Table 36

Former Northland Students Who Had Considered
Returning to School, by Indian Status

Indian Status	Yes		No		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Treaty	18	67	9	33	27	30
Metis	39	63	23	37	62	70
Total	57	64.0	32	36.0	89	100
Total %		64.0		36.0		100

82, or 23.5 percent, did not have any idea what they could or would like to study, and 6 respondents, or 6.6 percent, wanted nothing to do with further training. Some 9 individuals, or 10 percent, were interested in straight academic type schooling, art, music, or becoming a teacher technician. The remaining 53 individuals, or approximately 60 percent, felt they would like to study vocational subjects.

The question of where to find information about further training showed a considerable paucity of knowledge. Table 38 shows that of the 90 respondents, 62, or 69 percent, did not know of a single source of information. The best known source was Manpower, with 10 respondents, or 11.1 percent being aware of it as a source of information. The Alberta Vocational Center at Grouard was the next best known source, but only 5

Table 37

Former Northland Students' Types
of Training Desired

Training Desired	No.	%
Academic	6	6.6
Automotive mechanic	12	13.4
Welding	8	9.0
Secretarial	12	13.4
Home economics	5	6.0
Professional cooking	3	3.4
Nursing aide	5	6.0
Heavy equipment operator	2	2.2
Beauty culture	2	2.2
Forestry	1	1.1
Art	1	1.1
Music	1	1.1
Teacher technician	1	1.1
Oilfield battery operator	1	1.1
Store clerking	1	1.1
Armed Forces	1	1.1
Don't know	21	23.5
None	6	6.6
Total	89	100.0

respondents, or 5.6 percent were aware that help could be obtained from that source. The Indian or Metis Associations were not well known as sources of information, with only two persons aware of this source. Of the 27 students who had attended high school, 4 respondents named the high school guidance counsellor as a source of information concerning further education.

Very few of the respondents had given any thought to the subject of what other kinds of help were needed to assist them with further education. Table 39 indicates that 69, or 76.6 percent, of the respondents had no

Table 38

Former Northland Students' Knowledge of Where
to Find Information About Further Training

Source	No.	%
Manpower	10	11.1
A.V.C. Grouard	5	5.6
High School Counsellor	4	4.4
Armed Forces	1	1.1
Indian or Metis Association	2	2.2
Banff School of Fine Arts	1	1.1
Agricultural College	2	2.2
Oil Company	1	1.1
Other	2	2.2
No source known	62	69.0
Total	90	100.0

comment on the subject. Some 8 persons, or 8.9 percent, felt that enough was being done. A number, 6 respondents, or 6.7 percent, said they would likely still be in school if higher grades were taught in their home village school.

Table 39

Former Northland Students' Thoughts
Concerning Kinds of Help Needed

Students' Comments	No.	%
Higher grades taught in home village	6	6.7
Steady jobs	3	3.4
Enough being done	8	8.9
Financial assistance to students	1	1.1
Field workers for guidance and encouragement	1	1.1
Expanded A.V.C. at Grouard	1	1.1
More guidance from teachers	1	1.1
No comment	69	76.6
Total	90	100.0

Chapter 4

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, FURTHER RESEARCH

This chapter consists of a summary of the preceding chapters, a discussion of the major findings, some implications, and suggestions for further research.

SUMMARY

The Problem

The purpose of the study was to determine the magnitude of the dropout problem among Indian and Metis students in Northland School Division by obtaining current information on the numbers and percentages of graduates and dropouts, and ascertain their present status in terms of place of residence, job mobility, employment experience, and thoughts of further training.

Procedure

Information was gathered from two sources, the school registers located in the Northland School Division offices in Edmonton, and a semi-structured interview questionnaire. The population sample included all Indian and Metis students enrolled in grades five, six, and

seven in eight schools in the area north of Lesser Slave Lake in 1963/64. The progress of each student was traced through subsequent registers until dropout.

A semi-structured interview questionnaire was designed and administered to all students available in the population sample. Ninety interviews, or 47 percent, were completed out of a total population of 191.

The findings were tabulated and transferred to IBM punch cards. The data were described in number and percentage distributions, with no tests of statistical significance reported.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The Dropout Study

All 120 students for whom dropout data were available completed grade five, 4.2 percent had dropped out without completing grade six, 14.2 percent by grade seven, 30.0 percent by grade eight, 52.5 percent by grade nine, 77.5 percent by grade ten, 86.7 percent by grade eleven, and 96.7 percent by grade twelve.

Female students had a consistently lower dropout rate from grade eight upward: in grade eight, females 28.5 percent to males 32.0 percent; in grade nine, 49.5 to 56.0 percent; in grade ten, 73.5 to 82.0 percent; in grade eleven, 83.5 to 90.0 percent; and in grade twelve, 95.5 to 98.0 percent respectively.

When the schools were placed in two categories in

terms of geographical isolation, relatively isolated, and less isolated schools, the dropout rates of students from the relatively isolated schools were found to be much higher. In grades seven, eight, and nine, the dropout rates in the isolated schools were more than double those of the less isolated schools. In grade ten, the dropout rates were 93.0 percent for students in the isolated schools, compared with 64.0 percent in the less isolated schools. In grade eleven, the rates were 98.0 percent and 77.0 percent respectively. No student from the relatively isolated schools had completed a high school diploma, while four students from the less isolated schools had graduated.

The levels of education of the parents of students from the relatively isolated schools were considerably lower than those of parents from the less isolated schools. In the isolated school area, 60 parents, or 54 percent, had had no schooling, compared with 30 parents, or 26 percent, in the less isolated school area. Forty percent of the parents in the less isolated schools had completed grade five, compared with 19 percent for parents of students from the isolated schools.

When the educational achievements of parents and their children were compared, 5.6 percent of the parents completed grade eight, compared with 70.0 percent of the children. But when compared with the provincial dropout rate at the grade twelve level of 61.1 percent (Scragg,

1968:89), the Indian and Metis grade twelve dropout rate of 96.7 percent indicates a considerable difference in achievement. Indian and Metis levels of education have greatly improved within the past generation, and within the past decade, but there is much room for further improvement.

These findings concur with those of Lagasse (1959:103) in the rural Manitoba setting where there were also great differences in the Indian and Metis levels of education achieved from community to community. Lagasse found the levels of education to be directly correlated to the economic base of the community and to the length of time the community had been established.

In the present study, it would appear that the relative ease of accessibility to a high school was a key factor in the lower dropout rate in the less isolated schools. Several young men from the isolated school area remarked that they would still have been in school if higher grades were taught in their own villages.

The Follow-up Study

Present residence data were available for 168 former students. Sixty-six percent of the former students were living in their home village or in another village in the same area, thirteen percent were living in the towns and communities of the Peace River-Slave Lake area, seven students, or 4 percent, all of them girls, were residents of the cities of Edmonton or Calgary, and 11

percent were living in the northern British Columbia communities of Quesnel, Prince George, Chetwynd, or Dawson Creek.

The students from the less isolated schools were considerably more mobile than those from the more isolated schools. Eighty-nine percent of the students from the isolated schools were still living in their home village or in a nearby village in the area, compared with 49 percent of the students from the less isolated schools.

The higher the education level achieved above grade nine, the greater the tendency to move away from the home village area. Of the 11 students who had completed grade ten, eight were residents of towns or cities away from their home area. Of those students who had completed grade eleven, eight of the twelve were living away from their home village area. Of the four students that had graduated from high school, three were residents of towns or cities.

The Metis students tended to be more mobile than the treaty Indian students. Only one of the treaty Indians in this sample, or 3 percent, was living away from his home village area, compared with 42 percent for the Metis students.

A fairly high percentage, 71.1 percent, said they would be willing to move to a larger center if steady work were available. Males tended to be more willing to move than females, 75 percent to 68 percent respectively.

An employment rate of 29.6 percent was established for the population sample, with 51 percent of the males employed, and 10 percent of the females. Most of the employment was of a seasonal nature and the time of the survey, February and March, likely affected the employment rate.

Many respondents had sought work away from their home area, but had met with little success. The numbers that had looked for work in other areas varied from village to village. At Trout Lake, the most isolated village, 17 percent had looked for work "outside," while at Grouard, the least isolated village, 94 percent of the students had sought work away from home. Metis had been more active in looking for work than treaty Indians, 77 percent to 52 percent respectively, and more males, 85 percent, had sought work away from home than females, whose overall percentage was 60 percent.

A number of students, 64 percent, had given thought to further schooling, but there was a lack of knowledge as to where to find information about further training. Sixty-nine percent could not name one source of information. The best known source was "Manpower," with 11 percent naming it as a source, and the next best known source was The Alberta Vocational Center at Grouard, with 5.6 percent. One student remarked that teachers could be more helpful as an information source, or else an information officer might be hired to travel in the area, encouraging students

and supplying the necessary information.

The movement of the students in terms of residence and job hunting was directly correlated to the isolation of the village and the educational achievement of the students. Another factor in the movement of students or lack of it, was place of residence preference. Seventy percent of the students said they preferred to live in their home village or a nearby village in the immediate area. Even the two high school graduates who were available for interviews both said they preferred to live in their home village or in the immediate area. The one graduate was being trained as a teacher aide, and was successful in her desire to live at home, but the second, a secretarial student in the city of Edmonton, had yet to achieve that goal.

In general, the more isolated the school, the younger the age at dropout, the higher the dropout rate, the lower the parents' levels of education, the greater the tendency to remain resident in their home village and marry earlier, and the lower the percentage of persons who had looked for work in other areas. Females had a consistently lower dropout rate than males from grade eight upward, and had a much lower rate of employment. Treaty Indians had a higher dropout rate than Metis in grades eight through twelve, were much less mobile than Metis, and had a higher percentage unemployed.

IMPLICATIONS

1. Unless higher grades and more relevant curriculum are provided for students in the more isolated schools, the dropout rate will not likely improve much in those schools.
2. Since males tended to leave school much earlier than females, another close look at the relevancy of the curriculum for male students should be undertaken.
3. Since the high school program at Grouard has been discontinued since September 1970, there may be little improvement, or even a higher dropout rate for students from the Grouard, Utikuma, Gift Lake area.
4. The desire for further education by many of the dropouts will give further impetus to the adult education and vocational training program of Alberta Vocational Center at Grouard and throughout the area.
5. It would appear that there will be little migration of Indian and Metis youth from this area to the larger urban centers of Edmonton and Calgary.
6. Since the Indian and Metis youths of this area are very reluctant to leave, either greater enticements must be made, or the economic base of the communities of Slave Lake, High Prairie, Peace River, and other similar towns in the area must be strengthened to provide more jobs for Indian and Metis young people.
7. Something even more than job opportunities must be

provided in order to attract Indian and Metis youth to the towns, and encourage a change in attitude toward living in or within reasonably close proximity to the growth centers of the area (e.g., a friendship, recreational, and information center could be provided, and better housing than is presently available).

8. A major implication will be the greatly increased cost of such programs, but they will be essential to the successful entrance of the Indian and Metis people into the realm of "Full Fledged" (Hawthorne, 1967:23) Canadian citizens.
9. There will also have to be a change in the attitudes of the white residents of the larger centers towards the Indian and Metis if there is to be educational growth and economic development in the Lesser Slave Lake-Peace River area.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. A dropout and follow-up study similar to the present study could become a continual, longitudinal study and an integral part of the development of education in the area under the direction of Northland School Division.
2. A comparative study of Indians and Metis in other school divisions and areas of the province would be of value in educational planning.
3. Since there was a majority of Metis in the present study, a comparative study of students from Indian

Affairs' schools would be of considerable value.

4. A replication of the present study with dropouts and graduates, both Indian and white, of the High Prairie School Division, Lac La Biche, and other Divisions serving a diversity of ethnic groups would be useful for comparison.

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APPENDIX A

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE

I.D. Number.....

1. Name_____
2. Date of Birth_____
3. Age at Dropout_____
4. Sex: Male_____ Female_____
5. Parents' or Guardians' Names_____
6. Present Residence_____
7. Indian Status: Treaty_____ Metis_____
8. Marital Status: Single_____ Married_____
- Separated_____ Divorced_____
9. Number of Children: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
10. Highest Grade Completed_____
11. Father's Highest Grade Completed_____
12. Mothers' Highest Grade Completed_____
13. Name of School_____
14. How would you describe your early years in school?
Pleasant___ Unpleasant___ Neither___ Can't Recall___
15. How would you describe your last year in school?
Pleasant___ Unpleasant___ Neither___ Can't recall___
16. Which school subject did you like best?_____
17. Which school subject did you like least?_____
18. Why did you leave school?_____
19. Have you ever thought about returning to school?
Yes___ No___
20. Have you taken any training since leaving school?
Yes___ No___

Where? _____

What kind of training? _____

21. What kind of training would you like to take if you had the opportunity? _____
22. Do you know where to go to find information and help with further training? Yes___ No___ Where? _____
23. Are you presently employed? Yes___ No___
24. What kind of work are you now doing? _____
25. What kinds of work have you done since leaving school?

26. How long did you work? _____
27. Since leaving school, how many jobs have you had? _____
28. Have you ever gone away from your home area to look for work? Yes___ No___ Where? _____
29. What kind of work would you like to do? _____
30. Where do you prefer to live? _____
31. Would you move to a larger center if you could be sure of steady employment? Yes___ No___ Uncertain___
32. What larger town would you prefer to live and work in? _____
33. What kind of help for students who have recently left school would you like to see made available? _____

APPENDIX B

Department of Educational
Administration
University of Alberta
Edmonton 6, Alberta

Dear Student:

Northland School Division and the Human Resources Development Authority request your help in finding out the following kinds of information:

1. How far you went in school.
2. Where you are now living.
3. Where you prefer to live.
4. What kind of work you are now doing.
5. What kind of further training you would like to take if such training were available.

Only eight schools in the Slave Lake area, and some two hundred former students are being asked to answer this questionnaire. It is most important that each person answer as much of the questionnaire as possible and return it to me. I am sorry you were not at home when I called to see you. I would like to have met you personally.

A copy of the results of this survey will be sent to your community so you can see the answers. No names will be used, only numbers and percentages. All answers will be kept in strict confidence.

Thank you for your help in this study.

Yours Sincerely,

W. C. McCarthy

APPENDIX C

TABLE 127. PROGRESSIVE DROPOUT RATE OF AMERICAN INDIAN STUDENTS TO JUNE, 1967,
FROM A SAMPLE OF 50% OF SCHOOLS IN A SIX-STATE AREA ENROLLING TEN OR
MORE INDIAN STUDENTS IN GRADE EIGHT AS OF NOVEMBER, 1962

State	Sex	Total	1962-63		1963-64		1964-65		1965-66		1966-67		TOTAL	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Oregon	Male	19	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.3	2	11.1	3	15.8
	Female	23	0	0.0	1	4.4	1	4.6	4*	19.1	3	18.8	9	40.9
	Total	42	0	0.0	1	2.4	1	2.4	5	12.5	5	14.7	12	29.3
Washington	Male	46	1	2.2	5	11.1	5	12.5	4	11.4	1	3.2	16	34.8
	Female	45	1	2.2	3	6.8	10	24.4	3	9.7	2	7.1	19	42.2
	Total	91	2	2.2	8	9.0	15	18.5	7	10.6	3	5.1	35	38.5
Idaho	Male	16	0*	0.0	2	13.3	1	7.7	0	0.0	1	8.3	4	26.7
	Female	17	0	0.0	3	17.7	0	0.0	1	7.1	3	23.1	7	41.2
	Total	33	0	0.0	5	15.6	1	3.7	1	3.9	4	16.0	11	34.4
Montana	Male	132	13	9.9	6	5.0	13	11.5	8	8.0	9	9.8	49	37.1
	Female	127	14	11.0	9	8.0	17	16.4	12	13.8	7	9.3	59	46.5
	Total	259	27	10.4	15	6.5	30	13.8	20	10.7	16	9.6	108	41.7
North Dakota	Male	41	6	14.6	8	22.9	2	7.4	4	16.0	3	14.3	23	56.1
	Female	58	2	3.5	3	5.4	9	17.0	9	20.5	5	14.3	28	48.3
	Total	99	8	8.1	11	12.1	11	13.8	13	18.8	8	14.3	51	51.5

* - 1 Deceased

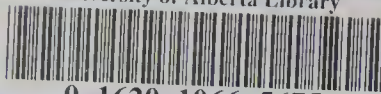
Table 127--Continued

Year		1962-63 Grade 8		1963-64		1964-65		1965-66		1966-67		TOTAL		
State	Sex	Total	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
South Dakota	Male	149	25	16.8	14	11.3	16	14.6	12	12.8	10	12.2	77	51.7
	Female	167	38	22.8	19*	14.7	17	15.6	17	18.5	14	18.7	105	63.3
	Total	316	63	19.9	33	13.0	33	15.1	29	15.6	24	15.3	182	57.8
GRAND TOTAL		840	100	11.9	73	9.9	91	13.7	75	13.1	60	12.1	399	47.7
* - 1 Deceased														

Source:

Alphonse D. Selinger, The American Indian High School Dropout (Washington: Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1968), p. 137.

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